



Country Report

UK

2008

Research Centre

Fact Sheet

- The UK's population has increased by 4% over the past 10 years, with London increasing by 9%, whilst the North East declined 1%.
- Average full-time weekly earnings range from £467 in the North East to £715 in London.
- Real estate, renting and business activities are the most important sector to the economy, producing 25% of total national output.
- Exports reached £244bn in 2006, with 62% of this total heading to Europe.

The UK covers a total area of 242,514 sq km and its coastline stretches along nearly 12,500 km. Natural resources include coal, petroleum, natural gas and iron ore.

in Northern Ireland, which has the 'youngest' population, with 25% of inhabitants aged under 16.

Population trends

The UK's population has increased by 4% over the past 10 years. The fastest growing region was London, which increased by 9%, whilst the North East's population decreased by 1%. In 2005, the UK had a population of 60.2 million. The most populous region was the South East with 8.2 million residents. Within the UK, the largest rise in population was recorded in Milton Keynes, increasing by 16%, whilst the largest fall, of 9%, was recorded in Eilean Siar. The UK has a population density of 248 people per sq km, but the most densely populated area is Inner London, with 9,360 people per sq km.

Age profiles

The UK has a working age population of over 37 million people, or 62% of the total population. There are nearly 12 million people under 16 and over 11 million people of pensionable age nationally. Within the UK, London has the highest percentage of people of working age, at 67%, contrasting with the South West, at less than 60%. Christchurch, in Dorset, has the 'oldest' population, with 33% of pensionable age, contrasting with Newry & Mourne,

Households

There are 25.1 million households across the UK, containing an average 2.4 people. The housing stock has increased by 8% over the last ten years. Across the UK, 29% of households contain just one person and 7% are occupied by lone parents. The national full-time gross weekly earnings average was £537 in 2006, ranging from just £467 in the North East, to £715 in London. Average weekly household spending is estimated at £432, which is equivalent to 80% of income. The Department for Communities and Local Government estimates that the UK average house price was £220,195 in October 2007. The cheapest region is Scotland, with an average of £164,960, whilst London is the most expensive, with an average of £343,444.

Regional Income

Regional output is commonly measured in terms of gross value added (GVA). Total GVA for the UK increased 6% in 2004 to £1051.9bn. The smallest regional contributor to UK output was Northern Ireland. It only produced output of £23.9bn, equivalent to just 2% of national output. London produced output of £176.8bn, equivalent to 17% of

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the UK's total. National output has increased by 63% since 1995. Solihull's output increased at the fastest pace, rising by 109% over the same period. Regional output can also be compared on a per head basis by dividing GVA by the region's total population. In 2004, the national average for GVA per head was £17,577. GVA per head ranges from £23,922 in London, to £13,352 in Wales. London's GVA per head has increased by 68% since 1995, the fastest of all regions. Wales reported the smallest increase, of 46%. Over the last 10 years the largest increase in GVA per head was recorded in Solihull, at 107%, but West Cumbria achieved the slowest growth across the UK, at just 18%.

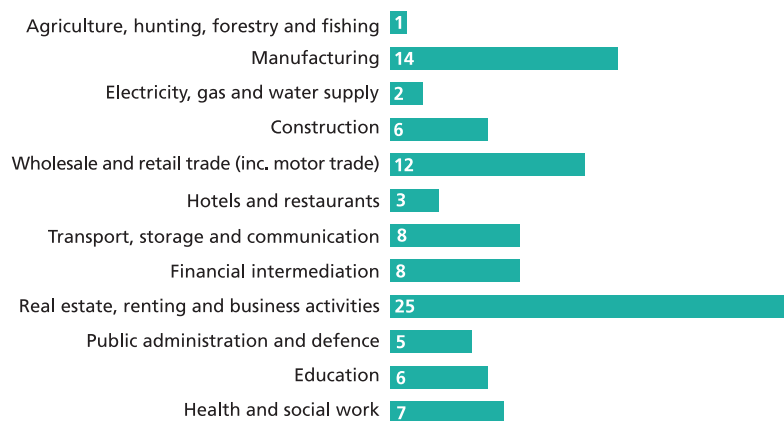
Major Industries

The largest contributor to the UK's output is real estate, renting and business activities, which produce 25% of total output. This is followed by manufacturing, which accounts for 14%, and retail & wholesale, which accounts for a further 12%. These three industries produce 52% of the UK's total output. Regionally, manufacturing is still more important to the North West and the East Midlands. Financial intermediation accounts for 19% of London's output, signalling the importance of financial services to the region. Public administration, education, health and social work account for a greater proportion of output in Northern Ireland and Wales, than the UK average.

Exports

Exports from the UK amounted to £244bn in 2006. Machinery and transport

Major UK Industries (% of output)



accounted for 45% of all foreign sales. Chemical goods, at 15% of the total and manufactured goods, at 11%, were the other main export sectors. At present, 62% of the UK's exports go to Europe, 15% to North America and 10% to Asia.

Workforce

The national economic activity rate stands at 79%. This figure includes those in or actively seeking work. The region with the highest level of economic activity is the South East, at 82%, whilst Northern Ireland has the lowest, at 73%. The highest level of economic activity is recorded in Shetland at 91% and the lowest in Tower Hamlets, at just 63%.

In 2006, a total of 27.9 million people were employed within the UK. The service sector accounted for 83% of total employment. Within that, public administration, education and health jobs accounted for 27% of jobs while the distribution, hotels and restaurant sector

employed a further 24% of people in work. Manufacturing and construction jobs account for 11% of jobs. The unemployment rate across the UK was 5.3% in 2006, with London the region with the highest unemployment, at 7.4%.

Sources: ONS, Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), NOMIS, HMRC and UKTradeinfo

Regional output per head in 2004 (£)

